

Approved For Release 2003/04/24 : CIA-RDP80B01676R000100040008-1

Rear Admiral Rufus L.
Taylor, USN
Director of Naval Intel-
ligence
Department of the Navy

9 February 1966

Executive Registry

66-653

NR-66-547

Dear Dick,

Enclosed is a copy of an item extracted from the out-
of-town edition of Neue Zürcher Zeitung of 22 January 1966.
It occurred to me that you and Sherman Kent, and perhaps
[redacted] might find it of interest.

You probably know of the Neue Zürcher Zeitung, but in
case you do not, it might be of interest to you to know also
that it is regarded in news circles very highly and, by some,
as the best newspaper in the world. One of my top analysts,
Larry Healey, thinks that their man on Communist activities
and affairs is extremely well informed and perceptive.

Warmest personal regards.

Sincerely,



RUFUS L. TAYLOR

Mr. Richard Helms
Central Intelligence Agency

NAVY review(s) completed.

*acknowledged
used*

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From: Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 22 January 1966. Out-of-town edition # 21, p.4.

Kx. Self-assurance and confidence in a North-Vietnamese victory, which determined, only one year ago, the tone of the North-Vietnamese propaganda, have been replaced by a less optimistic approach. The leaders of the party now speak openly of difficulties and of the need for sacrifices, and their prophecies of fast victories have been replaced by the truculent statement that the Vietnamese people will continue the "anti-American war for the deliverance of the fatherland" - if necessary - for ten or twenty years, or even into the next generation. On 19 July 1965, Ho Chi Minh declared: "The patriotic fight of our people encounters hardships and difficulties, and we shall have to beware of self-pity as well as of over-confidence."

It is true that any precise knowledge of the actual conditions, the strength, and the prospects of North Vietnam is lacking. While great numbers of reporters publish highly realistic reports on the course of the war, from South Vietnam, despite a censorship of news, the general public throughout the world receives, from North Vietnam, but sporadically photos and reports of shot-down airplanes, and bombed hospitals, reports of victories and declarations of unbreakable resistance or doctored reportages of biased journalists. In a similar way, the tales of the few foreign visitors, who generally did not travel outside Hanoi, are hardly suitable to remedy this lack of news. Solely analyses of the edicts of the government of Hanoi, of the articles of the North-Vietnamese party newspapers, and of the domestic and foreign propaganda of Hanoi are able to afford a direct and fragmentary insight into the present situation of North Vietnam, after one year of war. The glossy propaganda material does not hide all the effects of the war on the country, behind its heroic facade. It also becomes evident from this material that the rulers at Hanoi are being misled by illusions as to their capabilities and to the international power structure. The tensions and fluctuations of the Soviet-Chinese conflict are mirrored in the barely hidden discord within the top-leadership of the Lao-Dong party, and many an absurdity and uncertainty of its decisions is to be explained on the basis of internal differences and of the quarrel between the pro-Soviet and the pro-Chinese lines of policy at Hanoi. The demand made by Secretary General Le Duan on 19 September is characteristic of this disagreement within the party and its leadership: "Unity and agreement must prevail within the party, and it is necessary to oppose all individualistic ideas and efforts directed at the strengthening of personal power positions."

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Precarious war economy. For North Vietnam, which had fought the inherent evils of the Communist system, vainly, during the last few years, and which suffers from economic chaos, supply difficulties, apathy, and - in addition - corruption, the adaptation to war mobilisation was not easy. It is true that Ho succeeded, following the American "escalation", of February 1965, to arouse a fighting mood and enthusiasm in his subjects. It has been reported that, up to the end of 1965, 1.5 millions have volunteered for the army, 1.7 millionsof women have assumed "three responsibilities" for production, defence, and family, and 2.5 millions of juveniles have joined the "Triple Readiness" movement for study, production, and fighting. But, very soon complaints were noted in the press of the party, to the effect"that the people have not understood the present situation." The leaders of the party had to take a stand, time and again, against the defeatist opinion "that the American imperialists cannot be defeated, and that a war of long duration will bring only more suffering to the Vietnamese people." It was noted critically that not all of the young people between 15 and 30 years whose number is 4 millions, have joined the "patriotic movement", and Ho Chi Minh pleaded at numerous youth meetings, in August, in favor of overcoming the resistant attitudes of the young generation.

The party newspaper "Hoc Tap" admitted openly, in August 1965, that the adaptation of the country to defence requirements, with simultaneous continuation of the production - "the hammer in one hand, the gun in the other hand" - caused deep splits in the organisations of the party as well as "errors and deviations of the cadres". The army newspaper "Quan Doi Nhan Dan" suggests, moreover, that all did not go well when the troops for the air defence were brought into action and that short-comings became evident as to their readiness and mobility. In connection with similar critical comments, the party newspaper "Nhan Dan" demanded, on 8 December, "stricter discipline in the case of air-raids."

By way of protective measures against the American air attacks on North Vietnam, hundreds of thousands of the inhabitants were evacuated from the endangered regions, 300,000 plants and shops were moved from Hanoi alone, and schools were removed. Tens of thousands of farmers were shifted from the delta region into the mountain areas. It was even conceded officially that these mass resettlements have caused complications of supply and production, and the new arrivals as well as the original population are admonished by government appeals to get along together and to assist one another.

Even though Ho Chi Minh had come up, one year ago, with the slogan that everyone had to do the work of two men, in the interest of the defence of the country, it seems that the economic situation which had been stagnating for years, has deteriorated even more. The official statistics, which have presented, since 1961,

global ~~Approved For Release 2003/04/24 : CIA-RDP80B01676R000100040008-1~~ the effect that in the very regions that have been hit by air attacks, the production has increased in a phenomenal manner - up to 400 % - probably are destined largely to stimulate resistance and are not based on actual estimates. In this respect, the Party Secretary Le Duan stated somewhat more soberly, in December: "In the last six months, the situation in the provinces hit by air-raids has shown that the production, by and large, could be continued despite the shortage of supplies and consumer goods, and that the morale of the population as well as the public order could be maintained, more or less."

The few large plants that have been built by the Soviet Union and China are practically at a stand-still, unless they have been relocated and changed over to the production of arms. Part of the industrial centers such as the group of textile plants "Nam Dinh", the apatite mines of Lao Kai, the groups of the chemical and iron industries of Viet Tri and Thai Nguyen, the irrigation installations of Ban Thach, and the central power plant of Uong Binh were heavily hit by air attacks. In the course of the Summer, a series of government edicts ordered a complete change-over of the production to small local plants that should operate largely in the interest of agriculture; the leaders expect that this measure will ease the burden of the means of communication and transport that have been struck by the air-raids. But, it has been found recently that this decentralisation has caused controversies with the central management of the economy, and that it has led to a loosening of the controls, and now, it has been announced that the "symptoms of localism" will be fought.

Reluctant peasants. Hanoi announced, not without pride, that the harvest of 1965 was abundant, but has not yet published any exact figures. Visitors of Hanoi report that the supply of the capital was functioning well. Despite this seemingly favorable situation, the leaders felt compelled, in December, to introduce severe measures in order to safeguard the harvest and to replenish the stock-piles. The Central Committee had made known a decision, as early as on 6 October 1965, that provides for further collectivisation of agriculture, and that aims at a stricter control of the party in rural areas. In this connection, "Nhan Dan" wrote on 11 October: "In order to increase our agricultural production under the new conditions, we shall have to fight not only against enemy sabotage but also against non-revolutionary conservative ideas; we shall have to overcome obsolete techniques and to strengthen the "dictatorship of the proletariat" in rural areas." At a governmental conference on supply problems in October, "numerous short-comings" were found. Time and again, the press of the party criticises that the peasants have taken advantage of the war situation and have enlarged their private lands, that they are hoarding and doing business at the black market, and that they show "anti-democratic tendencies."

The lead ~~Approved For Release 2003/04/24 : CIA-RDP80B01676R000100040008-1~~ to take counter-measures against the psychological warfare on the part of the South Vietnamese and the Americans. It is true, however, that their effect is hard to estimate from the outside. Warnings against rumor mongering and "pacifist attitudes" as well as the threat of severe punishment in the case of the possession of enemy leaflets and gift packages, and the continual intensification of the protective measures against "subversive intruders" permit us to conclude that the American propaganda actions against North Vietnam have not been entirely unsuccessful.

The provincial newspapers stress, again and again, the three "do-nots": "do not talk, do not listen, and do not know of anything." There is also a repeated mention of the demand for a "reinforcement of secrecy, of safeguards against spies, and of the public order". In addition, the internal propaganda in North Vietnam abandons Marxist flourishes and phrases referring to the world revolution more and more, while it appeals more widely to the patriotism in North and South Vietnam; it recalls the glorious past of Vietnam and the past successes against foreign invaders.

The official propaganda of Hanoi abounds with news of victories. Up to the end of 1965, more than 850 American combat planes supposedly have been shot down, and 17,000 American soldiers are supposed to have been killed or wounded by Viet Cong in South Vietnam. Those who know the imaginative manipulations of North Vietnamese statisticians, can have but little faith in these data, even though remarkable successes of the conventional - and frequently primitive - air defence cannot be denied. On the basis of the presentations found in the North Vietnamese press, world opinion would be, without any restriction, on the side of Hanoi and of the Viet Cong, and opposed to the American Vietnam policy. In the declaration of the government of 5 November, the following is stated: "On the five continents, and even within the United States, a powerful and wide movement of thousands of millions of persons of all political persuasions and religious faiths has arisen who demand the immediate end of the war from the American government."

False picture of the outside world. Hanoi loudly welcomed the anti-draft movement of American students, and the self-autodafé of Morrison in front of the Pentagon was praised by the poets of the party as a heroic act. The various front organisations and Ho Chi Minh himself documented their approval by messages to important personalities in America and to Anti-Vietnam organisations. On 16 October, "Nhan Dan" based its "firm belief in the final victory of the Vietnamese people" on this wrong estimate of the attitude of the American people.

The top leaders themselves also seem to be prejudiced by wrong judgments and

~~ignorance of the outside world~~ ~~Approved For Release 2003/04/24 : CIA-RDP80B01676R000100040008-1~~ ~~They~~ ~~of 8 April~~
1965, and thereby, on the complete capitulation of the United States and on the
taking-over of South Vietnam by the Viet Cong as the only acceptable solution
of the Vietnam conflict. In their statements, there are - at best - nuances
as to the question whether, after the victory, the "re-unification" should be
carried out immediately or following a prolonged phase of transition. Their
conviction as to their ability to defeat America is strengthened by the incorr-
ect equating of the internal situation in America and of America's military
power with those of the French Fourth Republic during the Indo-Chinese War, and
the "experiences of the Anti-Colonial War of 1945 to 1954" are applied to the
situation of today, in a schematic manner. Instead of agreeing to a compromise
solution, the North-Vietnamese leaders cling to the hope that they will be able
to drive the Americans into the sea. They are supported by Peking in their in-
transigence. At Hanoi, there seems to be a conviction to the effect that, in
an emergency, China will help with "volunteers", as it did in Korea. It is true
that Ho Chi Minh and his followers are pleased to accept the military and techn-
ical aid of the Soviet Union, but they have refused, up to this time, also to
grant to the Soviet Union the right of co-determination of its use. This attit-
ude of the North Vietnamese leaders explains why they have turned down the peace
proposals of Washington scornfully, up to this time, and without any regard to
the precarious situation of their country and of the sacrifices of the popul-
ation.

~~Legend: Women acting as a coast guard patrol. From a North-Vietnamese propa-~~
~~ganda pamphlet.~~

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